

CLAIMS

WE CLAIM:

1. A contact assembly for use in an electrical switching apparatus having
an actuator, comprising:

a housing enclosing an electrical contact and a pusher selectively actuatable by
the actuator to operate the contact;

means for joining the housing to the electrical switching apparatus; and

means for resiliently locking the housing to the electrical switching apparatus.

2. The contact assembly of claim 1 wherein the joining means comprises
a tenon on the housing received in a mortise on the electrical switching apparatus.

3. The contact assembly of claim 2 wherein the joining means comprises
a dovetail joint joining the housing to the electrical switching apparatus.

4. The contact assembly of claim 1 wherein the locking means comprises
a snap lock.

5. The contact assembly of claim 1 wherein the locking means comprises
a flexible web extending from the housing with a projection on the web engaging a rib on the
electrical switching apparatus.

6. An electrical switching system comprising:
a main housing enclosing an actuable apparatus including an actuator
extending outwardly of the main housing;

a contact housing enclosing an electrical contact and a pusher selectively
actuable by the actuator to operate the contact;

a mortise on one of the main housing and contact housing and a tenon on the
other of the main housing and contact housing for joining the contact housing to the main
housing; and

a snap lock for resiliently locking the contact housing to the main housing.

7. The electrical switching system of claim 6 wherein the mortise and
tenon comprise a dovetail joint joining the contact housing to the main housing.

8. The electrical switching system of claim 6 wherein the snap lock
comprises a flexible web associated with the contact housing with a projection on the web
engaging a shoulder on the main housing.

2 9. The electrical switching system of claim 6 wherein the main housing comprises first and second parallel ribs having facing channels to define the mortise and a third rib extending angularly from the first and the second ribs.

2 10. The electrical switching system of claim 9 wherein the snap lock comprises a flexible web extending from the contact housing with a projection on the web engaging the third rib.

2 11. The electrical switching system of claim 10 wherein the tenon extends from the web in alignment with the projection.

2 12. The electrical switching system of claim 11 further comprising a blade extending from the web to guide the snap lock.

13. An electrical switching system comprising:

2 a main housing enclosing an actuable apparatus including an actuator having opposite ends extending outwardly of opposite sides of the main housing;

4 a contact housing enclosing an electrical contact and a pusher selectively actuable by the actuator to operate the contact;

6 a mortise on each side of the main housing and a tenon on each side of the contact housing for joining the contact housing to either side of the main housing with the pusher proximate one of the ends of the actuator; and

a snap lock for resiliently locking the contact housing to the main housing.

14. The electrical switching system of claim 13 wherein the mortise and tenon comprise a dovetail joint joining the contact housing to the main housing.

15. The electrical switching system of claim 13 wherein the snap lock comprises a flexible web associated with the contact housing with a projection on the web engaging a shoulder on the main housing.

16. The electrical switching system of claim 13 wherein each side of the main housing comprises first and second parallel ribs having facing channels to define the mortise and a third rib extending angularly from the first and the second ribs.

17. The electrical switching system of claim 16 wherein the snap lock
comprises a flexible web extending from the contact housing with a projection on an end of
the web engaging one of the third ribs.

18. The electrical switching system of claim 13 wherein each tenon
extends from opposite sides of the web in alignment with the projection.

19. The electrical switching system of claim 18 further comprising a blade
extending from opposite sides of the web to guide the snap lock.

20. The method of mounting a contact block to an electrical switching
2 apparatus, comprising:

4 providing a main housing enclosing an actuable apparatus including an
actuator having opposite ends extending outwardly of opposite sides of the main housing and
a mortise on each side of the main housing aligned with a rib;

6 providing a contact housing enclosing an electrical contact and a pusher
selectively actuable by the actuator to operate the contact and having a tenon and a snap lock
8 element;

10 joining the contact housing to either side of the main housing with the pusher
proximate one of the ends of the actuator by sliding the tenon in one of the mortises; and

12 resiliently locking the contact housing to the main housing by engaging the rib
with the snap lock element.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein providing a contact housing
2 comprises providing a flexible web associated with the contact housing with a projection on
the web to define the snap lock element.